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Cartwright, Richard.

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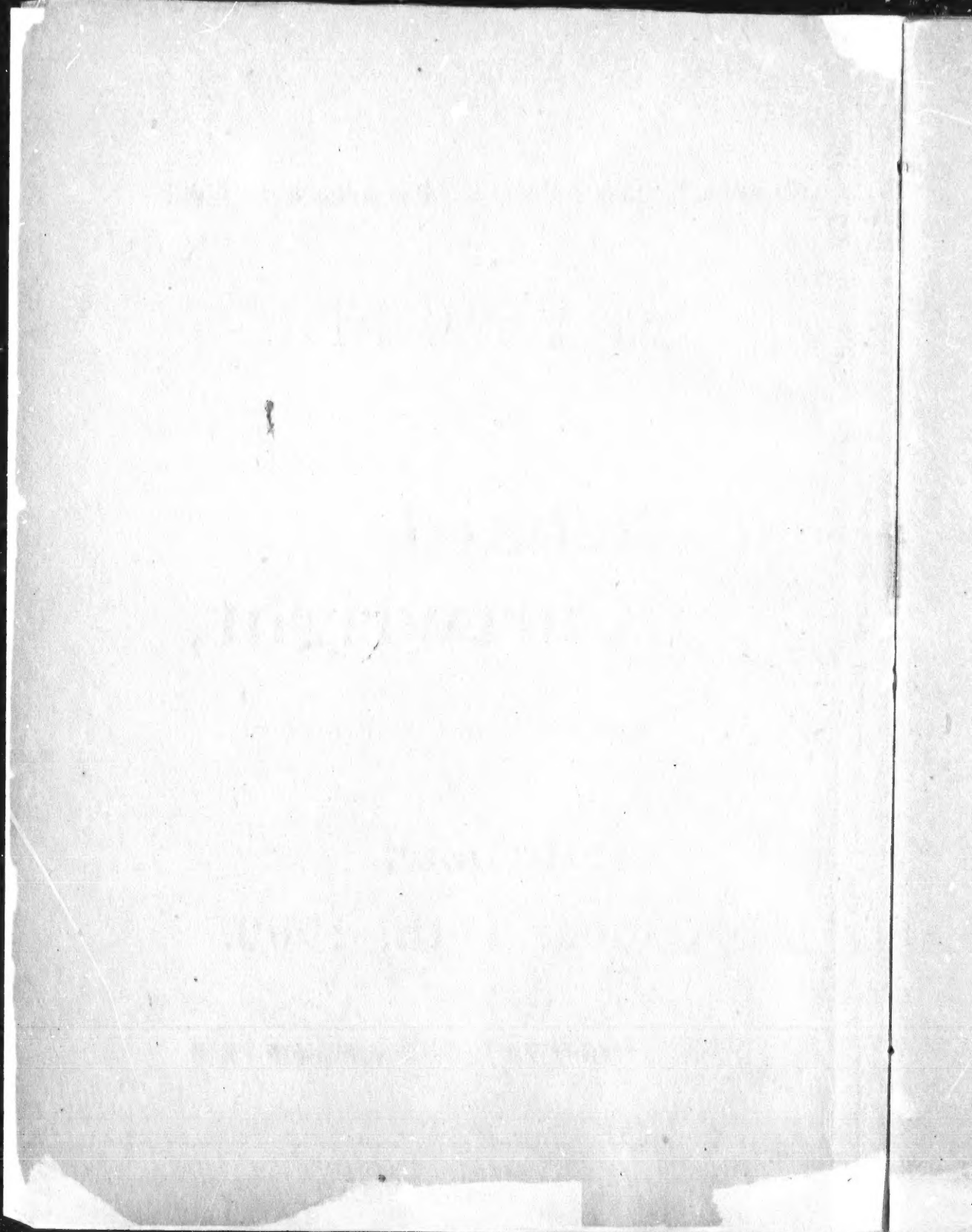
OF

Sir Richard
Cartwright,

Minister of Trade and Commerce,

At London,
September 19th, 1900.





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Speaking at London, Sept. 19th, 1900, Sir Richard Cartwright said: Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen: A good many years have elapsed since I last had the pleasure of addressing an audience in the good city of London, and, as might be expected, in the interval a considerable number of changes have come over the political kaleidoscope. Nevertheless, I hope to be able before I sit down to show you that despite the aspersions of their opponents, the Liberal party are, after all is said and done, where the Liberal always were, that the Liberal party are prepared to redeem the pledges in power which they gave in opposition; and that it simply requires a fair examination of the facts of the case, a fair understanding of the changes which have occurred in the position of Canada within the last few years, and notably within the last four years, in order to be able to prove to you, as I hope I shall succeed in proving to-night, that the Liberal party in power are prepared to the fullest extent to make good the statements and assurances which the Liberal party made to you when out of power.

No Objection to Fair Criticism.

Now, sir, I have not the slightest objection to the severest criticism that our opponents choose to make against us—on one condition only. I have myself had the reputation in time past of being a tolerably severe critic of our opponents—(cheers)—and it would very ill become me, and it would very ill become the Liberal

party, to dispute their right to offer to the electors of Canada the sharpest and the severest criticism they know how to offer as to our dealings with public affairs during the past four years. All that I ask of them, all that I ask of you, is simply this: I ask of them that their criticism should be free from wilful misstatements, and I ask of you that you will give us that measure of fair play that you will examine for yourselves the statements which we make to you, and judge, after you have looked at the authorities which we will show you, after you have examined the proofs that we have to offer, whether or not we do indeed deserve the confidence of our fellow-countrymen, and whether or not it will be to your interest and profit to replace us in power for a second term. Sir, I beg to say that I speak not merely as a politician, but I speak as a responsible minister of the crown; and I hope on this present occasion to make no statement to you for which I cannot give absolute proof; or where from the nature of the case, absolute proof is impossible, where I will not be able to give you good and substantial reasons for the statements which I may make to you to-night.

Canada's Financial Position.

Sir, on the present occasion I propose to deal with these three subjects in especial: I propose to deal with the question of the expenditure and the financial position of Canada. I propose to deal with the somewhat intricate and complicated subject of the preferential tariff in favor of Great Britain and its effects. And I propose, in the last place, to say a few words as to certain charges of corruption, as to certain charges of malfeasance, and as to improper dealings with ballots and other things of that kind, which have been pretty freely preferred against us by our Conservative opponents; and I may add a few words on the general policy, which, in my judgment, the Liberal party will do well to pursue in the future as well as in the past. Sir, I have noticed that it has been a very common trick of our opponents, particularly of late, to select certain disjointed sentences and certain disjointed quotations from the speeches of the various members of the Liberal party. They deal with these without the slightest reference to the context; without the slightest reference to the circumstances under which they were delivered; without the slightest reference to the changed position of the country, and indeed, to the changed position of other countries with which we have dealings, and on these they presume to found various charges of inconsistency, various charges of breach of promise on our part, and as I need not say also to bring forward—without much proof, however—various

charges of corruption and malfeasance on the part of the government. Sir, in my opinion this is rather a picayune style of argument on the part of men who have themselves held for many years responsible offices in government.

A Question of To-day.

The question before the people of Canada, Mr. Chairman, in my judgment, is not what ought to have been done twenty-five, or twenty, or fifteen, or ten years ago; the question is what ought to be done to-day, and the grounds on which we ought to be tried, the grounds on which we ought to be found guilty, or the grounds on which we have the right to demand your confidence, are, how we have administered the government of Canada during the period that it has been under our control, since the year 1896 down to the present moment. (Cheers.) Now, sir, I shall not waste more words on these preliminaries, but I will proceed to deal with certain statements made by our opponents, notably by Sir Charles Tupper and Mr. Foster, who, as you know, is the chief financial exponent of the opposition. I have observed with some regret that these gentlemen seem bent on maintaining their ancient reputation. It does not much surprise me to find that Sir Charles Tupper, as of old, has almost outstripped his own well-earned reputation as a wholesale manufacturer of fiction. (Laughter.) Nor am I altogether surprised, either to find that Mr. Foster runs him an exceedingly good second in the scarcely so respectable—but still, I suppose from a political point of view, useful—function of peddler and retailer of half-truths. (Laughter.) Now, sir, in the case of Sir Charles Tupper, who, of course, is entitled to preference as the leader of the Opposition, I observe that Sir Charles brings three several assertions against us.

Sir Charles and the Contingent.

First of all, I note that Sir Charles declares on every occasion that it was he (Sir Charles Tupper) who, by his influence on public opinion, really sent the Canadian contingent to South Africa. (Laughter.) Now, sir, I know Sir Charles' colossal self-conceit; and I am very well aware that Sir Charles is just the man to persuade himself that the conduct of the Government was influenced by the force of his phillipics, but I beg to inform Sir Charles Tupper on this occasion, as I have informed him elsewhere, that he had as little influence on the deliberations of the Government, he had as little influence on the question whether or not we would send a contingent to South Africa, as he had in framing the policy of the British Government as to whether or not they would send a

contingent to Peking on a recent occasion. (Laughter and cheers.) There is, sir, one condition, and one condition alone, on which I would be willing to admit that Sir Charles Tupper had a good deal to do with sending a contingent to South Africa. If Sir Charles is willing to declare—and on this occasion I would be willing to take Sir Charles' unsupported word, although it is not a thing that I am in the habit commonly of doing,—(laughter)—if Sir Charles is willing to declare that it was he who inspired Mr. Kruger's ultimatum to the British Government—that it was he who was really the promoter of the invasion of British Territory by the Transvaal State, then, sir, I am willing to admit that Sir Charles had a good deal to do with the sending of the contingent to South Africa. (Laughter and cheers.)

But, as I have not observed, however close the relations may happen to be between Sir Charles Tupper and Mr. Paul Kruger—(laughter)—that he has as yet preferred any such claim, I beg leave to tell him that he had absolutely nothing to do with the conduct of the government in sending that contingent forward. (Hear, hear.)

Governmental Responsibility.

One thing the government did not do. The government did not allow themselves to be stampeded. The government did not allow themselves to take a step of the greatest gravity without due deliberation and consideration—(hear, hear)—and so far from holding it a matter of censure on the part of Sir Wilfrid Laurier and his colleagues that they thought gravely and long before they decided on a step which they knew would involve the expenditure of millions of the people's money, and what in our opinion, was far more important, would put at hazard the lives of thousands of our fellow-countrymen in the battlefield—I say that they would have been entirely false to their duty if they had taken a step of that importance and magnitude without fully weighing and considering and counting the cost. (Cheers.) And I can say to Sir Charles Tupper and his followers, wherever they may be, that the government of Canada, acting in that fashion, deliberately and calmly showed a far greater sense of their responsibility and of the duty which they owed to the people than Sir Charles Tupper appeared to have felt when, without rhyme or reason, he took it upon himself, first of all, to denounce the government from one end of the country to the other for their delay, as he alleged, in sending forward a contingent, and, in the next place, and far worse, to make use of that alleged delay to attempt to stir up a racial war between the two great sections into which Canada is divided today. (Cheers.)

Prefereñtial Trade.

Then Sir Charles Tupper declares on every possible occasion that Sir Wilfrid Laurier threw away the offer of preferential trade ; that Sir Wilfrid Laurier might, if he pleased, without the slightest difficulty, have obtained from the English government any concession that he chose to ask, and that in place of that Sir Wilfrid Laurier deliberately slighted and scorned the offer which the English government were willing to make to him. Sir, that is a figment invented out of Sir Charles Tupper's brain alone. I know as well as Sir Charles Tupper what were the feelings of the English government, what were the feelings of the men who compose and who form the most influential part of the English government, and I have here before me, and I propose to read to you, a short letter sent to one of my colleagues by the president of the British Empire League, by one of the most eminent men in England, by a member of the present government, which sets forth in the strongest and clearest light the utter falsity of the imputation made by Sir Charles Tupper against Sir Wilfrid Laurier—that he deliberately set his face against the offer of a preference to our imports which the English government were willing to make to him.

Sir, that letter is in answer to a communication from one of our colleagues calling attention to Sir Charles Tupper's statement, is dated May 2, 1899, and is as follows :

Duke of Devonshire's Letter.

“PRIVY COUNCIL OFFICE, LONDON.

“My Dear Sir,—I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of April last. The best answer I can give to your inquiry is to inclose to you a copy of the report of the speeches made on the various occasions in the summer of 1897, when I had the pleasure of meeting the colonial premiers in my capacity as president of the British Empire League. I do not think that in any of these speeches you will find anything to support the view of my opinion on the question of granting preferential trade in the colonies which appears to have been held by Sir Charles Tupper and by some of the journals in this country, which seek to attribute what they term protectionist heresies to members of the British Government. It was no doubt my speech at Liverpool on the 13th of June, 1897, which was referred to by Sir Charles Tupper, and my admission that free trade had not done for us all that was once expected may have been commented on by free traders or opposition journals. But while I congratulated Sir Wilfrid Laurier and the Dominion of Canada on the offer which had been made of admitting British goods at reduced rates, as compared with those on the goods of other nations, as an important step in the direction of imperial unity, I had no authority to offer, and I did not offer, to Canada any preference in the British market. You are at liberty to make use as you please of this letter. Believe me, my dear sir, yours faithfully,

“DEVONSHIRE.”

That letter is from a man who bears in England the reputation of being one of the most straightforward statesmen that ever held a seat in any British Cabinet, and I say that it is not possible to find words in the English language which more completely and fully

exculpate Sir Wilfrid Laurier, and which more completely and fully contradict the allegations of Sir Charles Tupper that Sir Wilfrid Laurier had simply to ask and obtain preferential trade from the British Government in favor of Canada. Sir, I do not believe that Sir Wilfrid Laurier or any of us would have the smallest objection if the British Government saw fit to grant favorable terms to Canada in preference to the terms that it grants to other nations. But when we granted preferential trade to Great Britain, when the Parliament of Canada consented to discriminate in favor of British goods, we did it without haggling, without making a bargain with Great Britain; we did it in the hope (which I trust to be able to show you has been fully realized) that our conduct on that occasion would besides conferring a very great benefit on the Canadian consumer, result in a substantial benefit on the Canadian consumer, result in a substantial benefit to Canadian producers at large, by giving them a real substantial benefit to Canadian producers at large, by giving them a real substantial preference by the good will of the English consumer in the English market. (Cheers.)

Charge of Ultra Imperialism.

There is a third statement made by Sir Charles Tupper which I hardly know how to characterize. I do not know that he is repeating these statements in Ontario, but I do know that he has been repeating them from one end of Quebec to the other. Sir Charles Tupper, where it suits his purpose, is constantly declaring Sir Wilfrid Laurier and his cabinet desire to abdicate our autonomy, by ceasing to be a self-governing country, by becoming a mere appanage, so to speak, of the Imperial Parliament at Westminster, and are prepared, under these circumstances, to contribute \$46,000,000 a year as our share of imperial defense. Well, all I can say is this: that I am sorry that Sir Charles Tupper—a man at his time of life, a man who has held the positions he has held—should deem it consistent with his self-respect or the importance of such a subject to talk such arrant nonsense in any part of this Dominion.

Sir Charles Tupper's Romance.

I need not tell you that the very last thing in the world that Sir Wilfrid or his colleagues contemplate is, in any shape or form, resigning one particle of our rights of free, self-government in Canada. We prize those, we know their value, and most assuredly no member of the Liberal party, and no member of the Liberal Government are in the slightest degree disposed to part with any

shred of self government, any shred of power, any shred of authority which rightfully belongs to us at this present moment. As for the declaration that we will be called upon, under any circumstances, to contribute \$46,000,000 a year to imperial defenses, I simply make this statement in the full confidence, that every man of sense and intelligence from one end of Canada to the other, when that statement is known and heard and canvassed by them, will pronounce it, as I pronounce it, to be the most absurd figment that ever emanated from the brain of a—I hardly know how to designate Sir Charles in this instance—a political charlatan, I am afraid I must call him—

A Voice—Romancer.

Sir Richard Cartwright—I thank you my friend—a political romancer, who desired, for purposes of his own, to array the prejudices of a certain class of persons in one or two provinces of the Dominion against the government which he was opposing at the time. (Cheers and laughter.) Sir, I ask again, what is the policy which Sir Charles Tupper is advocating at this present moment? Why, sir, in Ontario, as you well know, for the last year he has hardly lost an opportunity of denouncing Sir Wilfrid Laurier because Sir Wilfrid Laurier took time to deliberate before he authorized sending forward a contingent to South Africa. That, in Sir Charles Tupper's opinion, was little short of treason. That in his, (Sir Charles Tupper's) opinion, was a thing which should have been done without the slightest consultation or deliberation, and he is continually blaming our delay, whereas, as everybody knows, our troops were sent to South Africa in the shortest possible space of time within which they could be properly equipped.

The Policy for Quebec.

But, sir, in Quebec we find Sir Charles Tupper denouncing Sir Wilfrid Laurier on every occasion as an Imperialist, as a man who is too British for Sir Charles Tupper's taste, as a man who is willing to sacrifice himself for this or that title or this or that trumpery distinction. Whatever else Sir Wilfrid Laurier may be, Sir Wilfrid Laurier, and I say it to his credit, and I say it to the credit of his colleagues, he and they are, above all things and before all things, true Canadians, and no more likely to sacrifice the autonomy of Canada than any of you can be. (Loud cheers.) I am willing to make all possible allowance for Sir Charles Tupper. It is not the first time I have come to the conclusion that Sir Charles Tupper is one of those unfortunate persons who may be best described as congenitally and morally colour blind. I am disposed to believe he is physically incapable of distinguishing

black from white, right from wrong, or truth from falsehood. (Laughter and cheers.) I can well believe that after Sir Charles has repeated certain statements for a number of times, he possesses the faculty of believing them, and it is only for the sake of others I have deemed it worth my while to spend this amount of time in exposing the absurd statements with which he has chosen to inaugurate his campaign on the present occasion. (Laughter and cheers.)

Mr. Foster's Half Truths.

And now, sir, I come to a different sort of person. I come to deal with some statements on the part of Mr. Foster. Now, Mr. Foster's special faculty, since ever I have known him, has been this: Mr. Foster will not make statements like Sir Charles Tupper, absolutely unsupported. Mr. Foster's especial faculty is, on the contrary, to make a statement which is partly true and practically false. He deals in half truths. Well, as I told the house on one occasion, you know perfectly well, as Tennyson puts it, "a lie that is all a lie may be met and fought outright, but a lie that is half a truth is a harder matter to fight," and consequently Mr. Foster requires at our hands a little more careful dissection than Sir Charles Tupper.

Sir, to give you an illustration. In the first place, I find that Mr. Foster declares, and declares correctly, that his expenditure in 1896 amounted to barely \$37,000,000. So far so good, but Mr. Foster is very careful to conceal from his audience, when he claims that he effected a reduction to \$37,000,000, that he effected that by a deliberate process of cooking his accounts, which I can liken to nothing but the conduct of a railway manager who, being desirous of presenting a favorable showing to his stockholders, should suspend all work for the purpose of maintaining his permanent way in good order, and should discontinue all repairs on his rolling stock. Sir, we have known these things done, and we have found them result in great loss of life to the passengers on that railway and in very great loss of money to the company whose rolling stock or other property had been allowed to deteriorate for want of proper repairs. Sir, that is exactly what Mr. Foster did in 1896. He did reduce the expenditure to a matter of \$37,000,000, but how did he do it?

Starving Public Services.

Sir, he did it in the first place by throwing over a number of items to a future year which ought to have been paid for in that year, and he did it in the second place by absolutely starving two most important services. He did it by discontinuing the drill pay

to our militia, with the effect of disorganizing a very large part of that force, from which, to some extent, they have even yet hardly recovered in many places. He did it by refusing proper repairs on public works, with the result that so much damage was done that in many cases an expenditure probably of millions has resulted which could have been saved by the judicious expenditure of a few hundred thousands at the time. More than that: when Mr. Foster claims credit for having reduced the expenditure to \$37,000,000 in 1896 he deliberately conceals the fact that in 1895 he had expended \$38,232,000, and in the second place, that for 1897 he demanded a sum of \$38,358,000 for his main estimates alone, not to speak of the very large supplementaries with which I will have occasion to deal a little further on. Sir, when a man in one year spends \$38,132,000, when in the year succeeding he asks for his first estimate \$38,358,000, and when for a special purpose in the intervening year he cuts it down to \$37,000,000, all that I can say is that his conduct is, to say the least of it, very suspicious, and that he has no ground whatever for declaring that he had effected a permanent reduction in the public expenditure.

Cross Entries of Several Millions.

Similarly Mr. Foster declares that our ordinary expenditure in 1900 will amount to \$43,000,000. Sir, that may be, but Mr. Foster is extremely careful to conceal from the people on all occasions this all-important fact, that of the four or five million additional which we propose to spend over his own estimate for 1897, almost the entire amount is made up of sums which cost the people of Canada nothing, which are in the strictest sense cross entries. Mr. Foster knows right well that for the purpose of the sinking fund alone half a million more had to be expended in 1900 than was expended in 1896 or 1897. Mr. Foster knows right well that for the purpose of administering our railways, a charge of \$1,500,000 or \$1,700,000 more was made in 1900 than was made in 1896 or 1897; and he knows that every penny of that amount was collected and credited on the other side in increased receipts of those railroads and did not cost the people of Canada one copper. (Hear, hear, and cheers.) Similarly he knows that \$1,700,000 or thereabouts was expended on the Yukon for the benefit of the people of the Yukon, for maintaining order in the Yukon district, and he knows that every farthing of that amount was collected from the Yukon, and it cost the remaining people of Canada nothing. (Cheers.) He knows further that there were three or four hundred thousand dollars additional of interest caused by the necessity of defraying the interest on the excessive increase of capital which he had caused in the years 1895 and 1896 by his own expenditures or by his own deficits. Add those together and you will find that the additional expenditure, four and a half millions or thereabouts, is reduced to an amount of some four or five hundred dollars at most, of which I will give you the details.

later, and to no part of which additional expenditure did Mr. Foster or his friends raise an objection on the floor of parliament, (Cheers.)

The \$38,000,000 Argument.

Then, sir, Mr. Foster declared, and declares at great length and emphasizes it very much, that I in particular asserted in 1895 and 1896 that an expenditure of thirty-eight millions was extravagant under the then conditions existing in Canada. Sir, that is true, I thought so, then, I think so still—(hear, hear)—and were the conditions the same I would use my utmost exertions to cut down the expenditure; but Mr. Foster keeps back from the people whom he addresses these important facts, that at the time I considered an expenditure of thirty-eight millions excessive, at that moment we had a deficit of over four millions of dollars on the expenditure of the current year. (Hear, hear.) He keeps back the fact that since that time the revenues of Canada have practically, to all intents and purposes, trebled, because at that moment all that we had to spend over and above our fixed charges was about six or seven millions of dollars, while to-day the amount at our disposal, exclusive of our fixed charges, is something like twenty-one millions of dollars—(cheers)—being three times the income at our disposal for all practical purposes that we possessed in 1895 and 1896. He keeps back the fact, the all important fact in my mind, that up to 1895 and 1896 the exodus of our people was practically unchecked, and the growth of the population of Canada had fallen below that of many old established European kingdoms, while sir, in the last four years we have every reason to believe that the growth of the population has resumed its normal figure in Canada, and that we have added within these four years probably 500,000 people to the total population. (Cheers.)

So that if you choose to measure the burthens of the people by a per capita standard our expenditure to-day for the self-same service that he purposed to ask \$38,300,000 for—would be found per head to be very considerably less than the expenditure which Mr. Foster himself proposed a matter of four years ago, deducting always those additional charges for which there are cross receipts, and which practically cost the people of Canada nothing whatever. (Hear, hear.)

Now, sir, these are vital facts. These are facts that an honest critic, however he might choose to explain them, would in making the criticisms that Mr. Foster indulged in have placed before the people of Canada. Mr. Foster has not chosen to do so, I have found it necessary therefore to correct Mr. Foster, and I trust that if you happen to hear him on a future occasion you will bear in mind the facts which I have stated, and which are within the power of any one of you to verify by reference to our public accounts. But, sir, Mr. Foster goes further.

Mr. Foster's Latest Formal Charge.

Now, I do not care particularly, to take Mr. Foster's recent speeches in evidence against him. These election speeches of his, I suppose, are

made for temporary consumption, and he is not perhaps, to be held to too rigorous accuracy in some statements that he makes ; but, sir, I have here the last formal motion which Mr Foster was good enough to place on record in the House of Commons of Canada. I find that in that motion Mr. Foster makes a charge against us that, over and above our capital expenditure, over and above all the moneys that he had definitely, so to speak, in sight, we had incurred further charges, which he enumerated in detail, involving an amount of some thirty millions of dollars, of which we gave no account. Sir, I want to call the particular attention of this audience, and more particularly of the business men of this audience, to the mode in which Mr. Foster makes up this statement. I find that the largest item of this charge of thirty millions consists of the following : Grand Trunk Railway, 99 years, \$140,000, \$13,860,000.

Well, sir, I do not know how to characterize a calculation of that kind on the part of Mr. Foster. Mr. Foster is a man of good parts. Mr. Foster is perhaps the best debater on the opposition side. Mr. Foster is a man who has been in public life for many years, and he has been a minister of finance, and a minister of finance for a matter of seven or eight years, if my memory serves. Well, sir, Mr. Foster rises in his place in parliament and puts it on record—otherwise I should not have ventured to believe my ears—but he puts it on record that a charge of \$140,000 a year—a contingent liability, mind you, a charge which is defrayed from the ordinary receipts of the Intercolonial Railway, and for which only in the event of their being a deficit in the Intercolonial Railway could the people of Canada be called upon to pay in their collective capacity, he puts it on record that the Grand Trunk charge of \$140,000 a year for 99 years, amounts to a debt of the people of Canada—because that is what he calls it in this paper I have in my hand—of \$13,860,000. Why, sir, if we leased this road for 999 years, which is not an uncommon term in England, by Mr. Foster's method of calculation, it would have equalled an addition to our debt of \$133,600,000. (Laughter.)

Sir, I would like to put this question to Mr. Foster—If Mr. Foster's opinion is that a contingent liability of \$140,000 a year amounts to an addition to our debt of \$13,860,000, what would the payment of interest of ten millions and a half, which is the amount which we now pay, amount to at that rate of calculation? (Hear, hear.) Sir, if Mr. Foster's mode of making out books be correct, the ten million and a half we pay for interest would represent a total indebtedness of \$1,050,000,000, our present total debt being about \$264,000,000 net, or \$347,000,000 gross. Now, sir, it is not quite easy to know how to qualify such statements made by a man in Mr. Foster's position, and I can hardly bring myself to believe that Mr. Foster can be so ignorant of the most elemental principles of calculation as to make the assertion that \$140,000 a year can by an imaginable possible mode of computation represent an indebtedness fourteen millions of dollars ; nevertheless, he has put that down in black and white in the very last motion that he placed on record in the Canadian Parliament.

But, sir, if Mr. Foster is not ignorant, if Mr. Foster knew what he was doing, if Mr. Foster is aware of what that really represented, then how am I to characterize and how are you to characterize a man in his position who makes such statements, and scatters them broadcast over the country, and, more than all embodies them in a formal resolution in parliament, for the purpose, I suppose, of capturing a few unwary votes? Sir, what sort of creature is this? I think I will have to leave it to Sir Mackenzie Bowell properly to classify Mr. Foster. (Hear, hear, and laughter.) Meantime, allow me to say that this statement, and this you can find for yourselves in any Hansard, this statement and this method of computation go very far indeed to discredit anything that Mr. Foster may have to advance on the subject of the debt or expenditure of the people of Canada.

Sir, one word more on that subject before I proceed to review a little in detail the facts and figures that I desire to bring before you. I notice that some of my worthy friends have threatened me with the wrath and indignation of our countrymen of German descent because I ventured to insinuate that Sir Charles Tupper was kindred to the Boers. That may be. Nevertheless, I have this to say, that after reading Sir Charles Tupper's speeches and Mr. Foster's speeches, and a few of the Conservative journals, I was very much struck with the following passage which I found in a recent American journal, written by a journalist who has been serving with the Boers throughout their campaign, and a man of very strong Boer leanings. The paragraph is as follows: "The Boers seem not to know or to like to tell the truth, for they lie to one another, are lied to by their leaders, and are all but fattened with lies by their newspaper organs." I do not wish to push the parallel too far, but could there be a better description of certain Conservative leaders? Is there not the strongest presumption and evidence that Sir Charles Tupper, at any rate, in that important respect, is very near the true typical Boer?

The Debt of Canada.

Now, sir, one of their accusations, and one upon which these gentlemen dwell much, is the fact that whereas we declared that it was extremely inexpedient in 1895 or 1896 that the debt of Canada should be increased further, the debt of Canada has increased under our own regime a matter of \$7,103,000 from the year 1896 to the present year, 1900. Well, sir, again that is a true statement. The debt has increased, and I shall presently explain to you why. But first of all let me call your attention to a few little facts. In 1893, when, as you are aware, Mr. Foster was minister of finance, the net debt of Canada was \$241,681,000. I find in 1894 it had risen to \$246,183,000. In 1895 it had risen to \$253,074,000. In 1896 it had risen to \$258,497,000. Now, from 1893 to 1896, a period of four years, both inclusive, you will observe, under Mr. Foster, the net debt of Canada had increased by \$16,816,000, as nearly as possible \$17,000,000. In 1896 we took over matters with a debt of \$258,497,000, and our record is as follows: In 1897 it had become \$261,538,000. In 1898 it had become \$263,956,000. In 1899 it had become \$266,273,000

In 1900, and I am giving here the estimate of the financial department, it had increased—how much does Mr. Foster think? Sir, at the commencement of the year it was \$266,273,000; it is now \$265,400,000. (Loud cheers.)

We have paid every liability, and more, during the last year, and we have reduced the debt by very nearly one million dollars. (Renewed applause) Even if we had nothing else to show, I don't think that it lies in the mouth of Mr. Foster and his associates to say that we are grossly extravagant because we have increased the debt seven millions. That is not all. When they went out of office, as Mr. Foster well knows, they left our canals uncompleted, a number of railway subsidies to pay, and a very large number of liabilities, amounting in all to fifteen or sixteen million dollars. Those liabilities are almost entirely wiped out and discharged, and notwithstanding the total increase of the debt, is barely seven million dollars.

What Increased the Debt?

Now let me ask of what that seven million dollars is composed? Sir, very nearly two millions of it are composed of the free gift of the people of Canada to the British Empire in equipping and sending out the South African contingent. (Loud cheers.) Had we not made that gift we would not have been seven million dollars in debt. Had we not made that gift our addition to the debt would scarcely have been five millions to-day. More than that. One million of that is composed of a discount on a $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. loan floated by Mr. Fielding and which has become charged upon this country.

Large sums of money were coming due on the English markets, and it was most judicious and important before we were called on to pay these off to establish a standard rate of $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. Our friends on the other side thought the South African contingent was but a small contribution. They desired that we should give more. They were with difficulty appeased by the knowledge of the fact that the British government refused to receive more at our hands. If you deduct the amount of the contingent, and the discount on our loan—I say nothing of the enormous arrears they left behind them which we paid—the total amount of increase in the debt which would be chargeable to us would be \$4,000,000, and not \$7,000,000. But for argument's sake, I give them the benefit of the seven millions, and I ask them to explain why it is a very extravagant thing for the Liberal government in four years under the conditions I have mentioned to you, in a country more prosperous than it has ever been since confederation, to say the least of it, to add seven millions to the debt, whereas it is prudence, economy and foresight on their part to add seven-teen millions in a similar period. (Cheers and laughter.) Now, sir, let us see how the burden stands. In 1897, I think it was, Mr. Foster estimated that he expected to make a charge of \$10,758,000 of interest. In 1901 Mr. Fielding expects to make a charge of \$10,889,000, being roughly about \$130,000 more.

It is as well established as anything can be of which you have not

got absolutely legal proof, that the population from 1897 to 1900 has increased about 100,000 families, so that Mr. Foster was prepared with 1,000,000 families to have expended \$10.75 per family on account of interest, while Mr. Fielding, with 1,100,000 families, is expending \$9.90 per family for payment of interest, being about 85 cents per family less than was expected to be expended by Mr. Foster himself. I think that will satisfy every reasonable man in Canada, whatever else we have done, we have not acted extravagantly ; we have kept well within bounds in any increase which we have found it necessary to make for the carrying out of important works. And remember that this addition of seven million dollars represents an expenditure of many millions on our canals, represents the expenditure of a very considerable amount on the Intercolonial Railway and the Crow's Nest Pass Railway, and certain other railways, all of which will contribute largely to swell the receipts of the people of Canada.

The Attacks on Mr. Tarte.

Then again, I notice that a vehement attack was made on my friend, Mr. Tarte, who, no doubt, will answer it in good time, with respect to what they call his profligate expenditure on public works. Now, I have got here a statement up to the 30th of June, 1900, furnished me by the finance department, showing the total expenditure on public works. I will give you Mr. Tarte's expenditure in the last four years, and I want you to contrast this expenditure with the expenditure of those gentlemen during the time when they were reasonably prosperous. In 1897 Mr. Tarte expended \$1,463,000 on public works chargeable to income. In 1898 he expended \$1,701,000 ; in 1899, \$1,902,000, and in 1890, \$2,295,000—a large sum. Here is their record : In 1884 the late administration expended on public works \$2,908,000 ; in 1885 they expended \$2,302,000 ; in 1886, \$2,046,000 ; in 1887 they expended \$2,133,000 ; in 1888 they expended \$2,162,000, and in 1889 they expended \$2,299,000. Now, if Mr. Tarte has been profligate in his expenditure, what are we to say of those gentlemen who during a period of six or seven years never allowed the expenditure to sink below two million dollars ?

Sir, the simple fact is this : When we came into office we found two things. We found, as I have said, that the public works had been starved, had been grossly neglected, and that numerous heavy repairs were necessary and had to be done in order to put these works in proper order ; and we found another thing—we found that in those seventy or eighty constituencies which in time past have customarily returned Liberals and had not supported the government of the day, no public works had been constructed at all. No matter how urgent the works were, they had not been carried out. Sir, I say this : I say that it was the duty of the Liberal government, I say it is Mr. Tarte's duty to repair the negligence of his predecessor, and to see that justice is done. You know, every one of you, that little hamlets with a population of only two or three hundred families, when it suited the government's purposes, were presented with costly public buildings at the public expense. You also know that in the

two ridings of Oxford, almost immediately adjoining you—the city of Woodstock and the important town of Ingersoll, with an export trade of millions, for thirty, or twenty years at any rate, have received no consideration from the hands of the government. I say we would have been previously to blame, and I say there was no ground for censure, but it is to our credit that when we came into power we repaired these things; when we came into power we saw that justice was done and fair play was given to that very considerable section of the population which in times past had not supported a Conservative administration.

But, sir, Mr. Foster and Mr. Macdonald and several more of the gentlemen are particularly grieved at the huge amount of Mr. Tarte's estimates. Perhaps you would like to know, and the audience would like to know, what Mr. Foster was prepared to expend in the year of grace 1897. I have here Mr. Foster's main estimates, in which he asks for one million five hundred and seventy-six thousand dollars for public works, and I have here also Mr. Foster's supplementary estimates, which he did not bring down, but which fell into my hands afterwards, where Mr. Foster asks or was prepared to ask for a further sum of \$2,422,610. So that in 1897, Mr. Foster, taking his main and supplementary estimates together, saw his way, a general election then impending, to ask for public works chargeable to income the sum of \$3,998,610, and yet Mr. Foster thinks that Mr. Tarte is profligate, that he is extravagant, that Mr. Tarte's estimates are of unexampled dimensions. Mr. Tarte may be all that, but his estimates were about \$1,000,000 less than Mr. Foster was prepared to bring down under like circumstances. I have not time to go through all of them, but if my newspaper friends wish it they can have these supplementary estimates and publish them in extenso. I will give them to you, however, in brief.

The Hand of Tupper.

In Nova Scotia the hand of Tupper is very visible. For harbors and piers alone that province was to have got \$648,890—and remark, gentlemen, and this bears on what I stated with respect to the starvation of the service in the past—of these no less than thirty-four items were for repairs. They are often marked as urgent repairs, as repairs that were imperatively needed: in other words, in 1896 the service had been starved, and no less than thirty-four separate items for repairs, according to Mr. Foster's own statement, required to be made in the year 1897. In New Brunswick there was to have been given \$167,000, in Ontario \$423,000, in Quebec, \$271,000, and in Prince Edward Island \$107,000, and that, mark you, for piers and harbors alone, the facts being as I have stated with respect to the sum total of the estimate.

Mr. Foster Appalled.

Another charge of Mr. Foster's that I desire to deal with is this, and he has put it on record in this motion I have in hand—Mr. Foster is appalled at the huge charges which we are making at this moment for ordi-

nary expenditures and for railway subsidies and for capital account. Now, I do not at all desire to deny that the estimates brought down are very considerable, but I call your attention to the fact that a very large proportion of these estimates are for works of public utility in the first place, and that for a very large amount of them you will receive amounts which will fully recoup you for all your expenditure.

But the point that I want more particularly to make is this: Mr. Foster thinks the expenditure for the last year, which will amount to about \$52,000,000 for all purposes, is most extravagant and unparalleled. He is very severe on the projected expenditure, but he is still more severe on the actual expenditure, on the actual expenditure for the year 1899, which will amount probably for all purposes and objects to about \$52,000,000, although, mind you, it does not involve borrowing a single cent. Here, sir, are Mr. Foster's own estimates for 1897. There were, first, main estimates, \$38,357,548; supplementary estimates, \$4,660,000; capital, \$2,819,000; railway subsidies, \$2,772,000; Prince Edward Island Railway, 127 miles, \$2,500,000; subsidies for the Crow's Nest Pass Railway, \$1,650,000, and the fast Atlantic service, \$750,000. Mr. Foster, under the conditions I have named, having a deficit of about \$4,000,000 in 1895, without any apparent justification for undertaking increased expenditure, without making any provision for meeting the deficiency, was prepared in 1897, to have asked the people of Canada for \$53,508,000. And Mr. Foster is appalled that Mr. Fielding, in 1900, under circumstances so widely and totally different from those which existed in 1896, should have spent a matter of \$52,000,000 or thereabouts for the public service. Remember, that in these fifty-three and a half millions of Mr. Foster's there was not one solitary cent called for maintaining the Yukon—a charge of \$1,500,000 or \$1,700,000 in the case of Mr. Fielding; there was nothing for the additional sinking fund, which amounted to \$500,000; there was nothing for the South African contingents, which amounted to close upon \$2,000,000; there was nothing for the additional interest rendered necessary for the purpose of meeting these various additions to the net debt of Canada that I alluded to a few moments ago.

Deduct therefrom Mr. Fielding's estimate—as I have the right to deduct them for the purpose of this comparison—and you find that striking out the Yukon, striking out the additional sinking fund, striking out the South African contingents, and making allowance for the interest on Mr. Foster's liabilities that has accrued in the interval, you will find that Mr. Fielding's total expenditure would have amounted to about \$46,000,000; and Mr. Foster is appalled at that, although he was prepared to ask for \$53,500,000 for his own purpose for the year 1897. Mr. Foster's main estimate was \$38,358,000. His supplementary estimates, chargeable to income only, which I have here, amount to \$3,180,000. His total amount chargeable to ordinary expenditure consolidated fund, amounted, therefore, in 1897 to \$41,537,000. Now, sir, Mr. Fielding expended about \$43,000,000—perhaps not quite as much, but we will say

\$43,000,000. If you deduct from that the sum for sinking fund, the sum for the Yukon, the sum for the additional amount for railways, which, by the by, I did not include in my former statement, though I ought to have done so, you will find that deducting these amounts Mr. Fielding's expenditure, for the same services for which Mr. Foster asked \$41,537,000, would have amounted to \$39,000,000 for the same identical service—(cheers)—and yet this is a most extravagant and profligate government for spending a matter of two or three millions less for the selfsame services that Mr. Foster was prepared to ask \$41,500,000 for. Now, gentlemen, I am sorry to have to weary you with so many figures, but I think I have established explicitly this much, at any rate, that it does not lie in Mr. Foster's mouth, or the mouth of his supporters, to say that the present government have in any shape or way violated their pledge by the addition that they have made up to the present date either to the annual expenditure or to the national debt of Canada.

Canadian Credit.

Now, one thing more. We have to look to the future. We have a great mass of indebtedness that falls due in the next few years. What are our chances for dealing with that? Well, gentlemen, I will just call your attention to this simple fact: when we placed our last loan on the market, English $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cents stood at 104 $\frac{1}{2}$ to 105. Those English $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cents are now 97 to 98 by the last quotation I have seen in *The Economist*. We sold our $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cents in 1897 for 91 $\frac{1}{2}$ net, as against 104 $\frac{1}{2}$ to 105, the price of English consols at the same time. Now, sir, while $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent English consols have fallen a matter of seven points, Canadian consols at $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent are selling at from 92 to 93—(cheers)—within a matter of four or five points of the price which is paid for English securities of the highest class guaranteed by the Government of England. (Cheers.) More than that, we have succeeded by placing the $2\frac{1}{2}$ loan on the market, in doing something which will probably govern the rate of future loans.

Mr. Fielding has also succeeded in obtaining a boon of very great importance as regards our investments—a boon which has been long sought for by the Canadian Government, but which has never been granted till now, and which I take leave to say would probably not have been granted unless the present government had testified in the way that I have mentioned its devotion to the empire and its willingness to make all reasonable sacrifices for the purpose of defending and upholding the British flag. (Applause.) We have been allowed to rank Canadian securities among those which are open to trustees for purposes of investment. Now, every business man knows the immense amount of money in the hands of trustees in England which is constantly seeking investment, and I know that our former correspondents in England were of opinion that if that concession could be obtained it would be worth a matter of four or five per cent. additional in the price of Canadian securities then standing on the London market, and consequently that when we come to float our succeeding loans for the purpose of taking up loans

which are now maturing from year to year, that we will be able to obtain a proportionately higher price for our loans. Sir, I say that in that one transaction alone Mr. Fielding and the present government have obtained a concession from the English authorities which will far more than compensate for the entire addition of seven millions that we have made in those four years to the national debt.

And now, sir, again I beg you to remember that all this additional expenditure that we have incurred, be it much or be it little, all this has been incurred under circumstances which warrant us, if any government was ever warranted, in making a slight addition to our expenditure for reasonable and proper purposes.

Great Growth in Trade.

Sir, within the last four years something like \$140,000,000 a year has been added to the total volume of our trade and commerce. (Cheers.) When we came in we found it a bare \$239,000,000. To-day, I believe, the total volume will reach considerably over \$380,000,000. (Cheers.) As I mentioned to you a little while ago, our available income, that is to say, the income which is available for ordinary purposes after deducting the fixed charges which no government can control, has grown from six or seven millions to something like twenty-one millions, our population has increased at least at a ratio double if not treble, beyond that at which it was increasing under the preceding government, and under those circumstances I say that we are amply justified in dealing with a reasonably liberal hand with all proper subjects of expenditure.

Sir, I repeat again, this government does not desire to waste one copper of the public money, but it is in no way inconsistent with Liberal principles or with Liberal practice that under the conditions that I have described, whenever we see an opportunity by expending a reasonable amount of money for fruitful purposes, for purposes which will bring in a large return to the people ultimately, there is no reason whatever that we should hesitate under such conditions in incurring any reasonable expenditure. (Cheers.) But, sir, we have taken exceedingly good care that the fixed charges of this country shall not be increased in any degree out of proportion to the growth of the population, or even absolutely as regards the rate of interest that we are likely to have to pay in the future. On the contrary, there is every reason to believe that within the next six or seven years we will be able very largely to reduce the fixed charge for interest and sinking fund that we are now paying, and that probably before the year 1907 or 1908 has closed the result of all these operations that we have been engaged in will be that instead of having to pay more you will have to pay considerably less in the shape of fixed charges on your interest accounts.

The Preferential Tariff.

And now, gentlemen, I desire to say a few words on a subject of great interest, and which I think has hardly been sufficiently explained, or

at least has somewhat been lost sight of, I propose to say a few words to you as to the exact effect of our preferential tariff. Gentlemen, in my judgment that is a much more far reaching measure than either its friends or opponents assert. I think I shall be able to show that its effects on the Canadian consumer—who is a party that the Conservative politicians seem disposed entirely to ignore—has been in the highest degree beneficial, and what is perhaps even of more importance, that the effect of our preferential tariff on the Canadian producer and on the Canadian manufacturer has been in the highest degree satisfactory. Now, sir, let me point out a little inconsistency on the part of our friends of the opposition. They are very fond of denouncing us as inconsistent, but what is their attitude as regards preferential trade? Why, sir, again and again and again I have heard every one of them on the floor of parliament, denouncing our preferences to Great Britain in one sentence as a shame and a delusion, an utter snare, a thing that has no value to England, and yet, sir, the words are hardly cold on their lips before they are denouncing us for not obtaining in consideration of granting that sham, delusion and snare an immense concession from England and a reversal of her entire fiscal policy.

If preferential trade granted by us to Great Britain is as they say, a sham, a delusion and a snare, how dare they make a complaint against us that we have not been able to obtain a greater preference from England? But if, on the other hand, it is a substantial benefit, as I believe it is, not merely to the English merchant and manufacturer, but to the Canadian consumer, and to the Canadian producer, then I say let them hold their peace or let them, if they dare, propose to abolish it and return to the former system. As to its being ruinous to Canadian manufacturers, I leave Canadian manufacturers from one end of the Dominion to the other to state what they have found. Sir, unless I am much mistaken, there is hardly a Canadian manufacturer who will not rise up and say, if he speaks the truth, that at this present moment Canadian manufacturers are enjoying greater prosperity than they have done at any period since confederation became a fact.

Why 'They Hate It.

Sir, I can understand why these men hate preferential trade. I can understand why they hate this preference. I can understand why they hate and detest to see Liberals above all others adopt preferential trade with Great Britain. Sir, it was the best possible contrast to their own lip loyalty, to their own hypocritical pretence of superior devotion to the British Empire. (Cheers.) What they talked about Liberals did, and, that is the sting of the whole business, so far as they were concerned. (Hear, hear.) Now, let us understand what it has done for the people of Canada. In the first place, I say that it has greatly reduced taxation. Every man can see for himself that when you place on the statute book a measure under which the British manufacturer is allowed to bring his goods into Canada, paying only \$2, whereas every other nationality is

compelled to pay \$3, that so far as British goods are concerned, and so far as Canadian consumers are concerned, there is a vast and substantial reduction, a reduction of one third of the entire taxation heretofore levied on British goods. (Hear, hear.)

But what perhaps has to some extent escaped the observation of those who are not in the habit of dealing with these subjects very exhaustively is this—the moment that you put such a law on the statute book you compel these foreign nationalities who are dealing in your market to bring down their prices to the level of the English manufacturer—(cheers)—and in that way without adding one farthing to the burdens of the people of Canada, you succeed in obtaining a large amount of revenue, chiefly from the American manufacturer, who, as you know, is our chief competitor, the chief competitor with the English manufacturer in our market.

The Americans Suffer.

Now, sir, for my part, I do not want to do or say anything that may bring us into collision with our friends in the United States, but at the same time, as they chose to impose extremely severe restrictions on our trade I have marked with some degree of satisfaction that the result of the preferential tariff has been this, that it has shifted the burden of taxation to a very large extent from Canadian shoulders to the shoulders of the American manufacturers. (Cheers) Now, sir, it is perfectly true, and I am not in the slightest degree disposed to deny it, that under ordinary conditions, when trade is not violently interfered with or disturbed, the consumer is the man who pays the taxes, but, sir, when any nation, as in the case of the United States, chooses by artificial and violent means to disturb the ordinary laws of production, then in a case like this, it may become our duty to meet them in a certain fashion, not by raising the taxes against them, that we were careful not to do, but by reducing the taxation in favor of those countries who deal with us on more equitable terms, and in so doing you produce this result, that the American manufacturer, in order to retain our market, is compelled to sell down very nearly to cost price, and even below it, or else his English competitor will take the market out of his teeth. And that is precisely what has been happening. I do not think that our trade with the United States has been greatly reduced, but I do know that the profits of the American manufacturer have been very greatly reduced and that the money which would heretofore have gone into his pocket had the tariff been left in its old position, now flows into the revenue of Canada, while the Canadian consumer obtains the advantage of getting his goods from the American manufacturer at the same price that the English manufacturer will supply them, and therefore you get a double, if not a treble benefit, because I am bound to say the same rule applies to the Canadian manufacturer; he, likewise, must meet the English manufacturer, and, although he has far less to fear from him than he has from the American, the Canadian consumer gains a benefit on three hands. (Cheers.) More than that, the practical result of all this is that whereas we had a protective tariff, we

have now got a revenue tariff. The result of the last reduction that has been made on English goods practically amounts to this—that, whereas under the old tariff they paid something like 30 per cent. which in the case of English goods is nearly a prohibitive tariff, they now pay something like 20 per cent.—a pretty high tariff, I grant, but in no shape a protective tariff. It is a revenue tariff pure and simple, and such a tariff as we would always have been willing to have submitted to, even in Mr. Mackenzie's time.

American Importations.

There is another matter which I desire to call your special attention to. Business men know perfectly well that I am correct in saying that American importations will always bear a much higher revenue tariff than English importations, and for obvious reasons connected with the mode in which the two countries carry on their trade. The Englishman is not disposed to slaughter his goods in your market, nor to sell his goods without a reasonable profit. The American, on the other hand, from various causes, very largely owing to the artificial regulations that have prevailed in the United States on the subject of the tariff, is constantly throwing his goods into Canada and is very often disposed to sacrifice them perhaps below cost price, certainly at nothing above cost price. Now, these conditions make it possible for us without in the slightest degree departing from the principle of a revenue tariff to levy a higher rate of taxation on American goods. And I may also remark that whereas, under the prohibitive or protective tariff, importations are almost certain to decrease or remain stationary, as they did for many years under the National Policy importations both from the United States and from England have largely increased under the operation of our present tariff, and that I am happy to add, without any detriment to our manufacturers. But, sir, the great advantage to which I desire to call the attention of all reasonable men in Canada, is this: that same stroke of ours, that same giving the preference as we did to the English manufacturers here, has in the highest degree, benefitted Canadian producers of every kind and description. It has given us, in fact, what these men desired to obtain by law, it has given us a real and substantial preference in the case of Englishmen and in the English market. Time was, sir, when Canadian goods introduced in the English market were very often forced to be introduced as American goods. To-day, sir, every agent of ours from one end of England to the other reports to us that the danger is quite the other way. They report to us that the Americans are shipping goods to England and calling them Canadian goods; and it will require all our exertions to see to it that our trade marks are not imitated, and that American goods are not palmed off on the English public as being of Canadian origin.

Our Trade with England.

In proportion to our population we buy more from England per head than the people of the United States do, and we sell to the people of

England very much more than the people of the United States sell per head. Our policy has been justified by its results in every direction. Commercially it has been a success. Politically it has been a success. It has shown the people of the United States that we are able to live and thrive wholly independent of them, although I am not disposed in the slightest degree to underrate the importance of extending our commercial relations with the United States whenever they show a disposition to meet us on equal terms. More than that, I say that our policy has placed Canada in the foreground as the one colony of Great Britain which has shown a keen appreciation of the advantage of the British market, and a disposition also to meet England half way and to extend to her reasonable privileges in consideration of the enormous mass of our goods which they take from us to our great advantage, and I hope to theirs. Compared with the total volume of trade of the United States, it is perfectly clear that the people of Canada have more than double the trade and commerce per head than the people of the United States possess, our population being five and a half millions, with a total trade and commerce of \$382,000,000, while the population of the United States is 75,000,000, and their total trade \$2,275,000,000, or in other words our total trade per head is \$70 as against \$30 on their part.

Election Frauds.

Turning to another subject, I have observed that on all occasions when our Conservative friends have been guilty of any particular iniquities, the very first thing they do is to raise a howl and charge their political opponents with having been guilty of those identical offences. In fact it has become so much their habit that whenever I hear a Conservative politician or journal cry "Stop, thief," I feel an inward desire to have the fellow seized and searched, and I am perfectly sure that in such cases you will find his pockets full of stolen goods. I notice that these worthies are continually bringing charges against the Liberal party of the grossest corruption and malfeasance in the conduct of their elections, and in particular have of late brought very serious allegations against the Liberal Government with respect to their conduct in the matter of two recent elections in West Huron and Brockville, alleging that they have been guilty of the most nefarious practices—of ballot-stuffing and various other iniquities at the polls. Let me point out one thing to you. The Government at any rate had very little to gain or very little to lose, as far as the elections in West Huron or Brockville were concerned, and it would not have appreciably affected their majority, which ran to something like fifty in the House, whether these seats were won or lost. There was, therefore, no temptation whatever to enter into any such felonious compact as our political opponents assert for the purpose of securing these two elections. Now, I do not want you to suppose for one moment that either I or the Government of Canada desire in the slightest degree to minimize the gravity of the offence committed by any party who may be guilty of tampering with the ballot. I regard that as one of the highest crimes that can

be committed by any man in a free country. I regard it as a double crime when committed by a Liberal, first, on account of the crime itself, and, second, by reason for the extraordinary folly of such action, knowing as I well do that the Liberal party would rise as one man to denounce and punish any man or any Government who was guilty of such an act. But whenever I hear these charges made I find it expedient to look back a little on the record, and consider what our opponents may have been about at the last election in 1896. I have here a very interesting statement compiled by the Clerk of the Crown in Chancery from the records in the elections of 1891 and 1896.

Rejected Ballots.

The following is a return of the rejected ballots in those two elections :

Riding.	1891.	1896.
Lambton East.....	11	123
Lincoln.....	62	136
London.....	29	293
Muskoka.....	17	175
Perth, South.....	17	129
Prince Edward.....	23	115
Waterloo, South.....	21	164
Wellington, Centre.....	15	129
York, North.....	30	101
Norfolk, North.....	17	114
Addington.....	21	145
Bothwell.....	11	167
Brant, South.....	23	165
Brockville.....	29	101
Bruce, East.....	8	133
Bruce, West.....	18	115
Cornwall.....	28	103
Grey, North.....	10	125
Haldimand.....	65	120
Hastings, North.....	7	140
Kingston.....	28	215
Kent.....	27	189
Welland.....	16	157
Wentworth.....	8	304
Twenty-four ridings.....	541	3,658

It Was Not Accident.

Is there any human being in this Dominion of Canada who believes that 3,658 ballots in 24 ridings were rejected by accident? Is there any human being from one end of this Dominion to the other who believes

that in 1896, when every returning officer and deputy returning officer were appointed by Sir Charles Tupper and his friends, those ballots were rejected in the interest of the Liberal candidates? (Cries of no.) If it was not by accident, and if it was not in the interest of Liberal candidates, in whose interest were those 3,658 ballots rejected? (A voice—Sir Charles Tupper.) One thing more. In that same year, and at that same election, 65 constituencies in the Province of Quebec cast their ballots and with what results? In 1887 there were in all Quebec 1728 rejected ballots. In 1891, 2024 rejected ballots. In 1896, 2308 rejected ballots. So that you will observe the average of rejected ballots in those 65 constituencies was about 35 per riding, and in the 24 Ontario constituencies I have named, it was 152 or over. Sir, it is simply absurd to argue in the face of those facts that these 3658 ballots were rejected by accident. No wonder that the Conservative leaders, no wonder that the Conservative politicians, no wonder that the Conservative press, denounced tampering with the ballot as the most heinous crime that can be committed in a free country. No men knew better, and I do not think I am uncharitable or unjust in saying, they have been there before. (Cheers and laughter.) I think there is in the facts I have given you clear and ample proof that when the Conservative leaders denounce ballot-stuffing as a very grave and great crime against the people they know exceedingly well what they had been speaking of, and that somebody in their interest—I am not able to locate that party—but somebody or somebodies in their interest had been guilty on a colossal scale of an attempt to deliberately destroy the popular verdict. And now to turn to a more pleasant subject. I stated some time ago that there was very good grounds for believing that at any rate the exodus of our people from Canada to the United States had ceased and that in part the tide was turning the other way. I have in my hand a memorandum from the Department of the Interior, from which I find that in 1897 the total number of immigrants from the United States who settled in Canada was reported to the department at 712. I find in 1898 that over 9,000 took up their quarters in Canada from the United States. I find that in 1899 11,000 took up their residence in Canada from the United States, and for the first six months of the current year I find the number was 8,000, being at the rate of something like 16,000 a year. I think that this is the best proof, the most substantial proof, that any man need give of the effects of the present policy, and also of the very able administration of the Department of the Interior and Immigration on the part of my friend, Mr. Clifford Sifton. (Loud cheers.)

The Liberal Party.

But it is not by what it has done during the last four years that the Liberal party will be judged in the future. If it is to maintain its proper position in the land, the Liberal party must be a progressive party, prepared with other measures and with fresh effort on their part to develop not merely the material but the social welfare of the people of Canada. We have not been forgetful of our duties in that respect. We are prepared

to aid and assist to every reasonable extent all enterprises that present a fair prospect of fruitful return to the people of Canada. Owing to the fostering care of the Government we see at one end of Canada, in Nova Scotia, heretofore a comparatively unprogressive portion of our country, a huge iron industry, which will in all probability give employment soon to 20,000 families. At the other end, in our own Province, we see great enterprises in the neighborhood of Sault Ste. Marie, which will in all probability give employment to an equal number of families at this end of the Dominion. We see, further, numerous and extensive industries from one end of Canada to the other, starting up and developing, not fostered by high tariff, but which are legitimate to the country. The Government are most desirous of promoting also sound relations between the two great classes of employers and employed and by their legislation have provided courts of conciliation, through the medium of which labor difficulties can be adjusted and dangerous and expensive strikes avoided. (Cheers.)

It is true that our present legislation is still tentative and is rather to be looked on as the germ of a better system than its full realization. But no man who has paid any attention to the enormous misery and far-reaching social dangers which are continually arising from strikes, especially in the U. S., (and of which there are samples enough this very year) can fail to appreciate the immense importance of providing some important tribunal in which both parties can feel confident, and before which they can state their respective grievances and place their cases fairly before the general public. I speak with knowledge when I say we have had already very good cause to know that the battle is half won when we can induce the disputants to meet and hear what each other has got to say. It is not by legislative interference, but by an appeal to the natural good sense and desire for fair play on the part alike of employers and employed that we can hope to bring about a genuine friendly sentiment between those who are eating off the same loaf, and whose interests rightly understood are not diverse but identical, and it is by the force of an intelligent public opinion, and not by the bayonet, that the Government of Canada desire to keep good order among our people. To what extent the industrial development of Canada may come to depend on the right solution of this problem, only those who are aware of the immense injury which has resulted to British trade from the perpetual recurrence of strikes of one sort or another in the United Kingdom, and who know how perilously near the two parties have come to a state of civil war in many sections of the neighboring republic, can form an adequate judgment.

As regards our relations with other countries, and especially with our Mother Land and with the people of the United States, we recognize that it will be our duty and our privilege, without relinquishing our right of self-government and without in any way promising our autonomy or loading down our people with burthens too heavy to be borne, to do what in us lies to solidify and unite the various portions of the Empire nor have the least fear that Canada in the future will play aught but a most important part in any project which can be devised looking to that

end. While as regards our neighbors to the south of us, even if we cannot (for the present) establish better trade relations with them than we now possess we can at least by all fair and honorable means cultivate a good understanding between them and ourselves and in so doing as I have so frequently pointed out confer a most substantial benefit both on our people and on the entire Empire of which we form a part.

Lastly and perhaps most important task of all it will be the especial duty and objects of the Liberal party so to administer the Government of this Dominion as to extinguish once and for all, I trust, those appeals to prejudices of class and race which elsewhere have borne such fruits of evil and which in Canada of all places it is simply suicidal in a national point of view to foster or encourage. These, sir, are the aims which the Liberal party should set before it in the future, and I think that what they have done in the past affords every reasonable guarantee that they will not fail to promote them by every means in their power in the time to come.

Asks for a Fair Investigation.

Gentlemen, so far as I know I have laid the facts before you plainly and simply. I have given you the authority on which I have made them. I repeat again all that the Government asks, all that the Government desires, is fair play and a fair hearing, and all that they specially request of their friends here and their friends in the rest of the country is that they shall investigate for themselves the truth of the statements which the members of the Government have made through my mouth and the mouths of others of my colleagues, and if they find, as I believe they will find, that every statement we have made is one that can be substantiated by the records, or one of which you can obtain reasonable proof by looking around you and seeing the condition of the country, then I think we may fearlessly claim that on our part we have done our duty towards you, and that you will be doing your duty and promoting your own interests, by renewing your lease of power to us. (Great cheers).

